6/10/71

Dear Saul, Valentine

I phoned you yesterday while I was in town in case you wanted to see the most recent letter from Jimmie. It had a few interesting things I'll tell you about. Later.

The immediate purpose of this letter (to you and the Editor in Charge of Self-Flagellation?) is to explain the two enclosed pieces from San Francisco papers.

You will recall that we had a long talk or talks about the Epstein piece which I described as thinly-described HJ propaganda intended to prompt the reactions like the Post's and to obfuscate the real issue by siezing upon what is not central, Garry's looseness with numbers. I then told you what I had learned in the Bay area from whites when I was there the late summer of 1968.

These stories confirm what I was then told. I was given further details. I may or may not recall them clearly after all this time or they may or may not have been accurate. My sources were two professional people deeply concerned about the state of society and official illegalities.

What the Panthers were really doing beginning with the shock of the King assassination is calling the black community. This happened in several cities. It might be interesting to compare just property damage in N.Y and say Washington to see if there can be a measure of effectiveness of this calling action. There was little further activity in DC then, and if it was ever significant I am unaware of it. However, in the Bay area it was close to or at its strongest.

The story I got is that the police holed the Panthers up at their houses. After a while and I think some shooting Hutton, the youngest, was sent out to surrender. He went first, that these stories do indicate. They were all unarmed. I think he had also stripped to his shorts so there'd be no misunderstanding or feeling that he might have a hidden weapon. I think he was also waving something intended as a white flag.

This belated admission, this too-late evidence of official suppression of the most relevant evidence, is something I have been concerned with for years. No concept of justice or of any genuinely free society can survive it. Yet instead of censuring the lawyers responsible, and it is a violation of the canons, it generally advances their careers (via Memphis, where both prosecutors immediately became judges). Going back to the Aaron Burr case, this has also been illegal.

On another subject, I have yet to hear from Leonard at the Times, or from Geoffrey Wolff, to whom I'd asked him to send a copy of my letter and of the enclosure, my 8/66 letter to Wolff, then at the Post. I think the reason is obvious and perhaps still libellous....Nothing further from Jerry on his allegations of threats to frame him by the FBI. I've asked him to get sworn statements from his sources and to keep a diary. He is planning to try and see James Saturday.

Best